

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 L-03 OES-07 CIAE-00 INR-07
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1421

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CU, AG, US
SUBJECT: US-ALGERIAN CULTURAL AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

REF: ALGIERS 1420

1. AS DESCRIBED IN REFTEL, TIMING OF CHAPMAN'S VISIT FORTUITOUSLY EXCELLENT. THE GENERALLY IMPROVED CLIMATE OF RELATIONS WAS REFLECTED IN BOTH THE TREATMENT ACCORDED CHAPMAN AND THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES. THESE WERE CONDUCTED IN A SPIRIT OF FRIENDLY COOPERATION AND RESULTED IN A TEXT WHICH INCLUDED ALL DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS (STATE 122273) AND WHICH WE ARE CABLING SEPARATELY.

2. ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS WERE LED ON ALGERIAN SIDE BY MFA'S DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION, ABDELGHANI KESRI, AWHO ACTED AS CHAPMAN'S HOST DURING STAY. TWO POINTS BECAME QUICKLY APPARENT:

(A) THAT GOA NEEDED A TEXT IN ORDER TO PROVIDE "LEGAL FRAMEWORK" TO CONDUCT INCREASED CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL RELATIONS AND

(B) THAT WHILE IT WANTED TO HAVE AGREEMENT RESEMBLING
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THOSE IT HAD CONCLUDED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAM COMMITMENTS, IT WAS ABOVE ALL DESIROUS TO REACH AGREEMENT. THUS WE WERE ABLE TO ARRIVE AT TEXT WHICH WE BELIEVE IS BROAD IN NATURE WITHOUT ANY SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS.

3. IN INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS AND FROM THE START OF

THE NEGOTIATIONS, WE WENT OVER AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND EMPHASEZED ITS DIVERSITY AS WELL AS LIMITATIONS OF USG IN THIS FIELD. ALGERIANS UNDERSTOOD OUR SITUATION BUT BARGAINED HARD TO INCORPORATE IN AGREEMENT SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS. THEY EMPHASIZED THROUGHOUT THE TREMENDOUS EFFORT THEY ARE MAKING TO PROVIDE THEIR COUNTRY WITH THE NECESSARY TRAINED CADRES. WHAT THEY SOUGHT WAS TO HAVE THE USG OFFER PROFESSORS IN AREAS WHERE THEIR UNIVERSITIES ARE WEAK, AND SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ALGERIAN STUDENTS IN THE US. THEY ATTACHED PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THE LATTER, AND ONLY RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED FACT USG COULD NOT MAKE SUCH UNDERTAKING.

4. ALGERIANS ALSO INSISTED ON A REFERENCE TO A MIXED COMMISSION. WE MADE CLEAR THAT OUR EXPERIENCE WITH SUCH A MECHANISM WAS NOT ENCOURAGING AND INDICATED IT TENDED TO GENERATE MORE WORK THAN RESULTS WARRANTED. HOWEVER, IT WAS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT FOR THEIR OWN INTERNAL PURPOSES, THEY NEEDED TO HAVE SOME SUCH ORGANIZATION WHICH AT LEAST IN THEORY COULD BE CALLED INTO BEING TO BRING TOGETHER ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WITH ALGERIAN-AMERICAN EXCHANGES. AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, THE NATIONAL CORPORATIONS OF THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT HAVE ON THEIR OWN ENTERED INTO A NUMBER OF LARGE CONTRACTS WITH AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO TRAIN NEEDED MANPOWER. WE INQUIRED AT DIFFERENT POINTS WHETHER AG SATISFIED WITH ARRANGEMENTS REACHED AND MENTIONED NEGOTIATIONS WITH AFME AND IIE TO SERVE AS ADVISERS. KESRI AVOIDED THIS WHOLE ISSUE. THE MFA HAS EVIDENTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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NO SAY IN THIS MATTER, AND IT BECAME EVIDENT KESRI WAS EMPOWERED TO DISCUSS ONLY THE NEEDS OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. A MIXED COMMISSION COULD THUS SERVE AS USEFUL FOCAL COORDINATING MECHANISM, BUT IN LIGHT OF OUR COMMENTS, ALGERIANS AGREED TO MAKE IT WHOLLY FLEXIBLE AND LEAVE REFERENCE TO IT COMPLETELY VAGUE: ITS COMPOSITION IS NOT DEFINED AND MEETINGS ARE TO BE CALLED ONLY AS NECESSARY.

5. WE HAD SECOND MEETING WITH SECRETARY GENERAL MOHAMED DEMBRI OF MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, KESRI AND OTHERS ON A TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC AGREEMENT. THEY UNDERSTOOD OUR GENERAL RESERVATIONS ON SUCH AN AGREEMENT AND DID NOT PURSUE THIS PARTICULAR QUESTION. THEY OUTLINED THE VARIOUS AD HOC ARRANGEMENTS WHICH THEY HAD WITH THE US AND EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE TO UNDERTAKE MUCH LARGER AND MORE COMPREHENSIVE JOINT PROJECTS. THEY RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF WORKING WITH AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

OR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO BUILD RESEARCH INSTITUTES FROM THE GROUND UP, INCLUDING DESIGNING SUCH INSTITUTES, ADVISING ON CURRICULUM AND TRAINING PROFESSORS. MORE SPECIFICALLY, THEY REFERRED TO THEIR NEEDS IN AGRONOMY AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES. THEY ALSO MENTIONED THEIR INTEREST IN THE POSSIBILITIES OF UNDERTAKING JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS, FOR INSTANCE IN THE FIELD OF DESERTIFICATION. WE EXPRESSED A GENERAL WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE AND INTEREST IN THESE IDEAS. WE INSISTED, HOWEVER, ON NEED FOR SPECIFIC PROPOSALS WHICH COULD BE ANALYZED BY COMPETENT ENTITIES ON BOTH SIDES AND WHICH COULD LAUNCH A PROCESS OF CONCRETE DISCUSSIONS. WE INDICATED THAT FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, SUCH DISCUSSIONS COULD BE CARRIED

OUT WITHOUT AN AGREEMENT. THEY READILY AGREED WITH OUR COMMENTS AND PROMISED TO GIVE US LIST OF PROPOSALS WHICH WE MIGHT CONSIDER.

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6. IN SUM, THE ATMOSPHERE IN ALGIERS TODAY OPENS POSSIBILITIES FOR MORE EXTENSIVE EXCHANGES AND COOPERATION THAN HAS SO FAR BEEN POSSIBLE. WE HAVE A PROPOSAL FOR A BROAD CULTURAL AGREEMENT THAT DOES NOT IMPOSE COMMITMENTS ON US BUT PERMITS THE ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY OF THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT TO APPROACH US MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN HERETOFORE. WE HAVE ALSO AN EXPLICIT EXPRESSION OF ALGERIAN INTEREST IN DEVELOPING SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES ON A LARGE SCALE. CHAPMAN WILL BE BACK IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS THE WHOLE SUBJECT MORE FULLY, AND LOOKS FORWARD TO MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR HAYNES. LYNE

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